Amendments to the Claims

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently amended) A medical screw and driver system, comprising:

(A) an elongated screw having external threads and an internal bore extending through at least a portion of the length of said screw, said screw being at least partially formed from a bioabsorbable material;

(B) an elongated driver having a non-circular cross-sectional shape approximating the cross-sectional shape of said bore, said driver being insertable into said bore and being matingly received therein to transfer rotational motion of said driver to said screw, said bore ~~exhibiting~~ being capable of shrinking and molding itself to the driver so as to exhibit a shrink-fit relative to said driver, such that the cross-sectional shape of said bore is closely mated to the cross-sectional shape of said driver and said driver may be withdrawn from said bore without altering said cross-sectional shape of said bore.

2. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 1, wherein said driver and said bore have a mating taper, each of said driver and said bore exhibiting a diminishing cross-sectional area in the direction of insertion of said driver into said bore.

3. (Original) The system of Claim 1, wherein said bioabsorbable material shrinks upon heating.

4. (Original) The system of Claim 3, wherein said shrinkage is due to crystallization of said bioabsorbable material.

5. (Original) The system of Claim 3, wherein said shrinkage is due to stress relaxation of said bioabsorbable material.

6. (Original) The system of Claim 3, wherein said bioabsorbable material is selected from the group consisting of aliphatic polyesters, polyorthoesters, polyanhydrides, polycarbonates, polyurethanes, polyamides, and polyalkylene oxides.

7. (Original) The system of Claim 6, wherein said screw has an additive to the composition thereof selected from the group consisting of bioabsorbable glass, bioabsorbable ceramic, biocompatible glass and biocompatible ceramic.

8. (Original) The system of Claim 1, where said screw is composed of an 15/85 (vol/vol) blend of TCP/PLA.

9. (Original) The system of Claim 1, wherein said screw is an orthopedic screw.

10. (Currently amended) A method for increasing driver-to-screw contact in a medical screw and driver system having an elongated screw formed at least partially from a bioabsorbable material and having external threads and an internal bore with a non-circular cross-sectional shape extending through at least a portion of the length of said screw and an elongated driver having a non-circular cross-sectional shape approximating the cross-sectional shape of said bore, said driver being insertable into said bore and being matingly received therein to transfer rotational motion of said driver to said screw, said method comprising the steps of:

(A) inserting said driver into said bore of said screw;

(B) heating said screw

(C) allowing said screw to cool, said steps (B) and (C) inducing said screw to shrink whereby said bore ~~exhibits a shrink-fit relative to~~ molds itself to said driver such that the cross-sectional shape of said bore is closely mated to the cross-sectional shape of said driver; and

(D) withdrawing said driver from said bore without altering said cross-sectional shape of said bore.

11. (Original) The method of Claim 10, wherein said screw is heated in said step (B) to a temperature at least equal to the glass transition temperature of said screw.

12. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 10, further comprising the step (B2) of maintaining said screw at an elevated temperature after said step (B) and prior to said step (C).

13. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 12, wherein said driver is heated simultaneously with said screw during said step (B).

14. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 12, wherein said steps (B), (B2) and (C) result in the relaxation of the internal stress of said screw.

15. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 12, wherein said steps (B), (B2) and (C) result in a partial crystallization of said screw.

16. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 12, wherein said screw is composed of 15/85 (vol/vol) blend of TCP/PLA.

17. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 16 wherein said step (B) includes the step of raising the temperature of said screw from room temperature to said elevated temperature, said elevated temperature being about 70°C and said step (B2) includes the step of holding said elevated temperature of said screw at about 70°C for about 4 hours.

18. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 16 wherein said step (B) includes raising the temperature of said screw from room temperature to said elevated temperature, said elevated temperature being about 70°C and said step (B2) includes holding said elevated temperature of said screw at about 70°C for about 4 hours, and further comprising the steps (B3) of heating the screw to a temperature of 100°C and (B4) maintaining the 100°C temperature for 8 hours before said step (C).

19. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 11, wherein said screw is heated during said step (B) to a temperature of about 5°C to 15°C above the glass transition temperature of said screw.

20. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 10, further comprising the step (E) of replacing said screw on said driver in the same relative orientation that said screw and said

driver were in when said step (B) was conducted.

21. (Newly added) The system of Claim 1, wherein said driver is replaceable into said bore of said screw without altering said cross-sectional shape of said screw.

22. (Newly added) The system of Claim 1, wherein said bore of said screw includes a bioabsorbable material.